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influence. If he resists the approaches of the head-devils of the "ring," thousands of dollars will be spent in gaining an influence with managers and publishers, to undermine, depreciate, and finally oust him from his position. The proprietors of newspapers, from the New York *Herald* down to the obscure musical weekly, fancy that their columns, from day to day, present just critical opinions, while, in fact, the opinions printed are in accordance with the interest and the order of the combination, which controls the critic, stops the mouth of the publisher by copious advertising, and humbugs the editor and the world by criticism dictated solely by their business interest. What the wages are that justify this gross sin, we do not know; but the half-paid critic—half-paid according to position, but doubly paid according to musical qualification—must see sufficient reason to justify him in selling his soul and his proprietor at the same time.

The Trinity Church Corporation naturally gave great offence to the "ring," by announcing a Festival without its consent, and the consequence was, that nearly all the independent critics came out in their respective journals the morning after the performance, with columns of unqualified abuse. Luckily, however, the sterling excellence of the performance satisfied the audience and stultified the abuse of the critics, and the second performance was a greater money success than the first. Still the villainous intention of the articles remains in evidence of an organized system designed to control, for private interests, the whole machinery of public amusements, to build up those who are in the "ring," and to crush out all who will not enter its charmed circle. So long as the combination controls, absolutely, all our music halls, so long will its power to do evil exist. The most certain way to weaken and break up its power, is to erect a grand public hall, which shall not be allowed to pass into the hands of speculators, which shall be an ornament to the city, and an attraction, as is the Boston Music Hall. New York needs it, and that such a building will pay a large interest upon the investment, can not for a moment be doubted. The enterprise would pay, and we hope before long to see it taken hold of by capitalists, not only as a matter of gain, but of pride in the increased attractions of our city.

Trinity Corporation carried through the Festival with spirit and determination, to a point of the noblest success. It met the marshalled opposition bravely, and overthrew it. The result will be, we understand, that the Festival of the Trinity Church Choirs will become a welcome annual, but on a larger and altogether more comprehensive scale. We are delighted at the spirited action of the Body, and are gratified beyond measure that so wealthy and so powerful a community as is represented by the four parishes of Trinity

Church, should take the lead in musical matters, as it did in matters of architecture, giving an elevated tone to the taste of the whole country. It has the power to purify the art atmosphere, and we trust that its movements in that direction will be prompt and decided.

In conclusion we must again compliment Dr. James Pech upon the brilliant result of his labors, and also his brother organists, Messrs. Walter, Erben, and Messiter, who sustained him most nobly. We must also congratulate the choristers, ladies, gentlemen, and boys, who did themselves much credit on both occasions. They did their duty well, though not willingly at first, through cunningly fostered prejudices, and proved what they could do under a competent and resolute conductor. The Reverend Dr. Young, upon whom the whole weight of the details fell, fulfilled his duties with extraordinary energy, promptitude, and spirit. Through all the time devoted to the Festival he truly represented the church-militant; he had to fight his way step by step, and he never faltered, no matter how numerous were the obstacles in his way. To his indomitable energy is mainly due the business success of the Festival, and the community owe him much thanks for his devoted and most able services.

AMERICAN PIANOS AT THE FRENCH EXPOSITION.—CHICKERING & SONS.

Although we must condemn the action of the United States Commissioner, Mr. Derby, in regard to the exclusive exercise of his authority as to those piano manufacturers who should be permitted to exhibit, we are bound to confess that America will still be brilliantly represented in every class of piano manufacture in the great Paris Exposition.

The pianos which Chickering & Sons have sent over, cannot fail to excite the admiration of the representatives of the whole world. They are unsurpassable in their beauty, and we believe, weighing excellence by excellence in comparison with foreign and native instruments, by whomsoever made, that they will be pronounced altogether unequalled. Chickering & Sons have stood at the head of the piano manufacturers of America, for nearly half a century. They worked hard for their position, they won it, and have maintained it in face of persistent and brilliant opposition, of countless thousands of dollars lavished to purchase or warp the judgment of the press, and of a thousand smart, but not honorable, business "dodges" designed to shake their prestige and undermine their standing.

A good name is a great vantage ground when it comes to a square fight, and this the Chickering's had in their favor, and one point speaks trumpet-tongued in regard to the character of the Firm, namely, that all the piano-makers throughout the country, with the ex-

ception, perhaps, of one or two, are unanimous in expressing for it the highest esteem and respect.

The Chickering pianos combine, in our opinion, those qualities which constitute a perfect piano, in the highest degree. We look for, especially in a grand piano, the largest amount of sonority, consistent with purity of tone; a graduated scale, brilliant and powerful throughout, but especially rich and vocal in the two middle octaves; a quality which is not merely loud, but out-spoken and far carrying; an expressive power which is termed the capability to "sing," or, in other words, to prolong the vibrations of each note in a dominant manner, so that the tones can be carried with an unbroken *portamento*, as by the human voice. To these requisites must be added that perfection of scale drawing, which ensures a perfect purity in the vibrations, so that the shifting pedal shall betray no imperfection or inequality; a mechanism which shall answer to the merest impulse of the most delicate technique, and yet retain its elasticity and prompt responsive power under the most vigorous enforcement, together with a general solidity in the construction of the instrument, with a mathematical accuracy as regards the striking points, so that the strings when struck with the greatest wrist-power shall give out a solid, unbroken power, and not yield and clang as we have frequently heard the Steinway grands do under the ferocious attacks of Mr. S. B. Mills.

The above are the qualities which, when combined in one instrument, make it as perfect as we can imagine in our present comprehension of piano manufacture. All these are embraced in the Chickering piano, to a greater degree than in any other instrument manufactured either here or in Europe. This is not inconsiderate praise, neither is it of that bunkum sort which fills columns of the newspapers with personal brag; it is a judgment based upon experience, and justified by the greatest European artists who have visited this country, and is also the deliberate opinion of the most eminent pianists who have tested the Chickering pianos in Europe.

There is besides a personal quality peculiar to these instruments, which we find in no other grand pianos, namely, a mobility of tone which admits of shades of intonation, affording a medium of expression as rich and varied as that of the finest violin. It is indeed a delicate and sympathetic exponent of the most refined and passionate thoughts of the composer and the pianist.

We have heard through friends in Paris that the Chickering pianos in the Exposition are exciting the highest admiration. Artists pronounce them perfect, and even the greatest manufacturers acknowledge their wonderful powers. Alfred Jaell was the first who tried them in Paris, and his admiration of their sur-

passing beauty was unqualified. The general impression seemed to be, that they would unquestionably carry off the highest honors that Jury can award, despite of the brilliant and powerful competition with which they will have to contend. The Jury consists of the following gentlemen:

General Mellinet, Ambroise Thomas, George Kastner, Fétis, Schiedmayer, piano manufacturer, Professor E. Hanslick, Lord Gerald Fitzgerald, and the Hon. Seymour Egerton.

A new scale Grand piano, made by Wm. Knabe & Co., of Baltimore, who may be justly termed the Chickering of the West, although not on exhibition, is justly exciting the warmest admiration in artistic circles. It is at the private house of its owner, who feels a natural pride in affording to the dilettante of Paris an opportunity to examine this splendid specimen of American pianoforte manufacture.

The first public expression of opinion, as to the surpassing merits of the Chickering pianos in Paris, we clip from that renowned musical authority, *La France Musicale*, April 14, 1867, edited by M. Marie Escudier. It is headed—

LES PIANOS CHICKERING.—Nous aurions voulu rendre compte aujourd'hui du concert donné mercredi à l'Athénée, et dans lequel le meilleur de nos pianistes, Théodore Ritter, a joué sur un piano américain destiné à l'Exposition universelle, un concerto de Mendelssohn, le rondo de Weber, et le *Braconnier*; de sa composition. Malheureusement l'espace nous manque pour faire, comme nous le voudrions, une étude complète de l'instrument sur lequel il s'est fait entendre. Comme ce magnifique instrument a été pour une bonne part dans le succès de l'éminent virtuose, il mérite un examen particulier. Aujourd'hui, nous nous bornerons à constater que l'immense renommée dont jouissent en Amérique les pianos fabriqués par Chickering et fils, à Boston, nous a paru complètement justifiée, et nous partageons, sans réserve, l'opinion du célèbre pianiste Gottschalk, formulée en ces termes:

"Le mérite qui distingue ces admirables pianos est un signe évident de progrès artistique. Rien au monde n'égale leur capacité 'de chant,' ni la rondeur harmonieuse du son. L'homogénéité est parfaite d'un bout du clavier à l'autre et dans tous les octaves. Les notes élevées sont remarquables par leur clarté et leur pureté qu'on ne retrouve dans aucun autre instrument, tandis que la basse se distingue par sa puissance, sans être dure, et par la magnificence de sa sonorité."

M. E.

(Translation.)

We should very much like to render an account of the concert given on Wednesday at l'Athénée, in which the best of our pianists, Theodore Ritter, played on an American piano, destined for the Universal Exposition, a concerto by Mendelssohn, the Rondo of Weber, and *Le Braconnier*, of his own composition. Unfortunately the want of space prevents us from giving a complete study of the instrument upon which he performed, but as the magnificent instrument contributed great-

ly to the success of the eminent virtuoso, it merits especial examination. To-day we must be satisfied by stating that the immense renown enjoyed by the American pianos made by Chickering & Sons of Boston, appeared to us entirely justified, and we share, *without reserve*, the opinion of the celebrated pianist Gottschalk, expressed in the following terms:

"The merit which distinguishes these admirable pianos, is an evident sign of artistic progress. Nothing in the world can equal their 'singing' capacity (de chant) nor the harmonious roundness of their tone. There is a perfect homogeneity throughout all the registers. The upper notes are remarkable for a clearness and purity, which I do not find in any other instrument, while the bass is distinguished for power without harshness, and for a magnificent sonority.

M. E.

OUR LEADING ART SCHOOL.

We think it is apparent to the meanest understanding that professes to know anything, even such as know only the word picture, that upon the corner of Fourth avenue and Twenty-third street, of this city, is an institution called "The Academy of Design." Why it is called the Academy of Design we are at a loss to comprehend, save only because it has continual designs on the public purse, and is conducted by designing men. The word "Academy," as far as we know the signification of it, means a school, or place of tuition, and certainly the close corporation of 23d street is none of this.

From time immemorial the Academy of Design has professed to keep an art school. This attempt is divided into two parts, the first being the Antique School, where the new pupil is supposed to be taught to draw from the model or statue, and receive elementary instruction in art, and the second, the Life School, where he learns to draw the living figure, and advances to all the higher grades of art study. With the last we shall have little to do; it is the school of the advanced artist, and its shortcomings can be better overlooked than the first, which is the introduction of the student to his future profession, and badly managed, is calculated to crush out whatever talent or enthusiasm he may bring to his work.

At the Twenty-third street establishment, which holds up its head and clamors loudly for precedent beyond all the art schools of America, about fifty pupils are entered for study in the Antique School. These pupils are tied to certain rules and regulations, enacted by somebody, which say that they must come at a certain hour, and go at a certain hour, and do certain things, under strong and fearful penalties, of which expulsion is prominent. Like the handle of a jug, these precious regulations are all on one side, and not a word is said about rules that shall govern *any one*

but the pupils. We were about to say masters, but recollecting in good time that no such individuals exist, we halted. Out of these fifty scholars, about fifteen or twenty put in a daily appearance, posting themselves in solemn silence at their labor, and free to follow the bent of their own fancy, draw away for six mortal hours, at the end of which time, no matter at how critical a period of their work, they must drop crayons and go forth. During this six hours no teacher approaches them, no Huntingdon, Leutze or Durand drops in to give them golden encouragement in a few words of advice or instruction, and not even a salaried officer of the so-called Academy of Design deigns to honor them with his countenance and knowledge of art. We believe we are speaking strictly the truth when we say that through this entire winter the pupils of the Academy, such as have not thrown up their crayons in disgust and gone to other and more genial places, have labored on in dreary, half-warmed rooms, without a word of tuition, a symptom of a lecture, or any of the mental or physical comforts that should emanate from this rich institution to encourage the young and struggling artist in his career. And yet this is called an *Art School*!

If this shortcoming arose from the poverty of the institution we would be one of the first to take the hat and beg for its relief; but it does not. It arises from criminal selfishness and neglect. Upon the rolls of the Academy are scores of names, each of which should should blush to display itself openly in print, knowing what we have here recorded. They should blush for their own sake, and for the sake of art, when an occasional hour of their time could do so much for its advancement. While they are clamoring to the national Legislature for protection from foreign talent, they are allowing native effort to die of very hunger. We have nothing to say of the salaried officers of the institution—they are fossils and nothing is expected of them; but for the Academicians we again declare that their neglect of the art school is personally and jointly a disgrace to them.

MARRIAGE OF AN ARTIST.—We have much pleasure in announcing the marriage of Signor Severo L. Strini to Miss Rosalind Merriam, of West Newton, Mass. The ceremony took place at West Newton, on Tuesday, April 30, at one o'clock, P. M., the Rev. Dr. Huntington, of Boston, officiating. The bride belongs to one of the oldest and best families of New England, and the festal occasion was signalized by the presence of over two hundred of the *élite* of Boston society. We have known the happy bridegroom for very many years, and our association has taught us that he is as true and kindly a gentleman as he is truly an artist. We can only add our warmest wishes to those of their hosts of friends, for